

I call on you to hold an official public hearing in my state.

Before the disastrous 2003 decision to weaken media ownership rules (which a federal court has now overturned), you held only one official public hearing. Further, FCC officials met behind closed doors 71 times with major broadcasters – but only five times with public interest groups. And to justify your actions, you used deceptive, industry-sponsored research data.

The will of Big Media had been heeded at the expense of American citizens and democracy itself. This has to end. Before you rewrite the ownership rules, I demand an official public FCC hearing in my state, impartial and verifiable research, and transparent debates.

It is time to put the needs of democracy – a diverse, skeptical, independent and competitive media system – ahead of profit-hungry media giants.

I am calling on you to keep the most important sources of local news and information local newspapers and broadcast TV stations independently owned, prevent national broadcast networks from dictating what programming and points of view must be carried by local broadcast stations, and require that local radio and TV stations have personnel located/stationed in the community who can cover news, weather and local emergencies in a timely fashion. Furthermore, I believe that it is important to create incentives to promote diverse ownership and presentation of all points of view in those media that citizens rely upon most to get information about important local and national civic events.